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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 MCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 SY-05 IO-13 OMB-01 TRSE-00
ACDA-12 /114 W
----------100804 140849Z /10
R 120500Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8297
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY IALAMABAD
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEHRAN 04526

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4
TAGS: PINS, SHUM, IR
SUBJ: INCIDENTS CONTINUE; GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES CRACKDOWN

REF: TEHRAN 4455

SUMMARY: AMID CONTINUING CLASHES IN QOM AND OTHER CITIES, GOI HAS ANNOUNCED CRACKDOWN ON DEMONSTRATORS AND A REDUCTION IN PERMISSIVENESS, VARIETY OF GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS INTENDED TO SHOW CONFIDENCE IN FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION BY VAST SILENT MAJORITY COUPLED WITH DETERMINATION TO END OUTRAGES BY FRACTIOUS MINORITY. END SUMMARY

1. INCIDENTS DESCRIBED IN SOME DETAIL REFTEL YESTERDAY CONTINUED MAY 10, WITH WIDESPREAD CLASHES BETWEEN STUDENTS AND OLDER DEMONSTRATORS IN QOM AND ELSEWHERE WITH GOI SECURITY GORCES, RESULTING IN NUMBER OF INJURIES AND POSSIBLE DEATHS. DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY REPORTEDLY INCLUDED THE HOMES OF SOME MULLAHS IN QOM, WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND, PHOTOS OF THE ACTION SHOWED MULLAHS INVOLVED WITH CONFIDENTIAL

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DEMONSTRATORS AS WELL. WE UNDERSTAND SOME MULLAHS IN PLACES SUCH AS KERMANSHAH (NEAR IRAQI BORDER) HAVE SPOKEN UP AGAINST RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE, AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI AND EVEN QOM GROUP HEADED BY AYATOLLAH SHARIATMADARI, BUT VAST MAJORITY OF RELIGIOUS LEADERS APPEARS TO BE GOING ALONG WITH RESISTANCE LED BY KHOMEINI AND QOM GROUP OR KEEPING THEIR SILENCE:

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2. AS REPORTED REFTEL, GOI ISSUED ANNOUNCEMENT
OVER RADIO LATE MAY 10 AND IN PRESS MAY 11
THAT "HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS" BY DEMONSTRATORS WILL NOT
BE TOLERATED. GOVERNMENT ARGUMENT IS THAT VAST MAJORITY
OF PEACEFUL CITIZENS ARE OUTRAGED BY SMALL MINORITY
INTENT ON VIOLENT ACTS IN UNIVERSITIES, AS WELL AS IN
CITY STREETS AND RELIGIOUS CNETERS. GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN
PERMISSIVE SO AS NOT TO APPEAR REPRESSIVE, BUT TIME HAS
COME TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THE PEACEFUL MAJORITY
AGAINST SUCH TROUBLE.

3. PRESS GIVES PROMINENCE TO ANNOUNCEMENT BY
PROGRESSIVE WING OF RESURGENCE PARTY, HEADED BY
MAJID MAJIDI, THAT ACTION IT HAS CALLED FOR IS IN THE
FIELD OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND NOT VENGEANCE. THIS IS
OBVIOOUSLY AN ITERATION OF EARLIER MAJIDI EFFORTS TO
DISASSOCIATE HIMSELF AND HIS WING OF THE PARTY FROM
BOMBINGS AND BEATINGS OF PROMINENT OPPOSITIONISTS BY THE
CLANDESTINE GROUP CALLING ITSELF "THE UNDERGROUND GROUP
FOR VENGENACE." IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN IF THIS MAJIDI
STATEMENT PRESAGES AN END TO VENGEANCE GROUP ACTIVITIES.

4. ALSO PROMINENT IN THE PRESS IS PRIME MINISTER
AMOUZEGAR'S SPEECH TO STUDENT GATHERING CONVOKED BY
RASTAKHIZ PARTY, MAY, O, IN WHICH HE URGED STUDENTS TO
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DISCUSS THEIR IDEAS OPENLY AND WITHOUT RESERVE, SINCE
THE FUTURE OF IRAN DEPENDS ON THEIR KNOWLEDGE, TALENT,
SINCERITY AND WILLINGNESS TO WORK HARD. AMOUZEGAR NOTED
THAT EVEN THE TINIEST EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ARE NOT UNAWARE
OF THE FACT THAT THEY MUST BE MILITARILY STRONG TO DEFEND
THEMSELVES AGAINST EXTERNAL THREATS. AT THE SAME TIME,
EUROPEAN HISTORY INDICATES IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS,
SINCE COUNTRIES WHICH REMAINED BACKWARD ECONOMICALLY LOST
THEIR FORMER PROMINENCE BASED ON POLITICAL
POWER.

5. ALSO IN THE PRESS WAS A REPORT ON SURPRISE VISIT TO
SOUTH TEHRAN RESIDENTS BY EMPRESS FARAH
APPARENTLY MAY 10, DRIVING AROUND IN A MINIBUS. STORY
SAID LARGE CHEERING CROWDS GATHERED AROUND HER AND DIS-
CUSSED THEIR PROBLEMS. IT ALSO STATES THAT SHE HAS MADE
MANY SUCH SURPRISE VISITS IN PUBLIC WITHOUT "ANY SECURITY
GUARDS." (COMMENT: WE ARE INCLINDED TO DOUBT ABSENCE OF SECURITY
GUARDS, THOUGH THEY MAY HAVE BEEN BETTER DISGUISED THAN USUAL
ON THIS OCCASION. REASON FORRITEM IN THE PRESS OBVIOUS).

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEHRAN 04526

6. EMBASSY HAS LEARNED IN CONFIDENCE THAT EFFORTS TO OPEN DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE QOM RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP LED BY AYATOLLAH SHARITMADARI AND THE SHAH HAD MADE SOME PROGRESS PRIOR TO EVENTS MAY 9-10. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT EFFECT THOSE EVENTS HAVE. IN ANY CASE, THERE WOULD APPEAR TO BE LITTLE GOI OR RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP CAN DO IN REGARD TO POSSIBLE FURTHER CLASHES TODAY,MAY 11. IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED THAT LARGE NUMBRS WILL ATTEND MOURNING CEREMONIES TODAY FOR PEOPLE KILLED IN QOM AND TABRIZ MAY 9, TREATING TODAY AS THE THIRD DAY AFTER THE EVENT. COUPLED WITH OTHER REPORTS WE HAVE BEEN RECEIVING OF DEMONSTRATIONS IN TEHRAN AND PERHAPS ELSEWHERE, WE CAN EXPECT ANOTHER HOT DAY.

7. COMMENT: OUR INITIAL ESTIMATE IS THAT GOI ANNOUNCE-MENT OF CRACKDOWN WILL EXPRESS ITSELF PRIMARILY IN MORE POLICE AND ARMY FORCES BEING BROUGHT TO BEAR ON DEMON-STRATIONS, RATHER THAN AFFECTING BROADER RANGE OF LAW-ENFORCEMENT LIBERALIZATION OF RECENT MONTHS. WE HOPE, AND ON THE WHOLE BELIEVE, THE GOI AND SHAH WILL CONTINUE
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TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF DIALOGUE WITH CONSERVATIVE

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RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP IN CONTEXT OF SUBSTANTIAL LIBERALI-
ZATIONS, THOUGH COUPLED WITH GREATER EMPHASIS ON NEED TO
AVOID FURTHER TROUBLEMAKING IN CITIES AND IN UNIVERSITIES.
FURTHER GOI MOVEMENT WILL PROBABLY DEPEND ON OUTCOME OF
DIALOGUE AND LEVEL OF VIOLENCE IN NEXT FEW WEEKS. AMBASSADOR
HOPES TO GET A READING OF GOI THINKING WHEN HE SEES
AMOUZEGAR EARLY NEXT WEEK.
SULLIVAN

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